

bills and legs, the latter of a black colour. Their behaviour was quiet; but they were never placed with other birds, so I do not know how they would have treated these. Like Dr. Vilaro's specimens, they seemed to be very sensible to heat, panting more than other birds, and their only cry was a piping, chirping sound, very different from the harsh note of the birds which came under Dr. Vilaro's observation.

VIII.—*Notes on Animals kept in the Alipore Zoological Garden. No. I.—*
By RAI K. B. SANYAL BAHADUR, *Superintendent of the Garden.*

[Received March 26th; Read April 2nd, 1902.]

OBSERVATIONS ON THE HABITS OF ORANG OUTANG IN CAPTIVITY.

Orang Outang thinks and acts with a view to accomplishing an object. An Orang Outang and a Proboscis Monkey (*Semnopithecus [Nasalis] larvatus*), lived in two contiguous cages separated by iron gratings. Although of different temperaments—the Orang Outang lively, vivacious and prone to mischief, and the monkey phlegmatic and indolent—they were best of friends; and enjoyed each other's company as much as the intervening partition would allow. The Orang's friendship for the monkey was, however, not altogether disinterested. They were usually fed about the same time upon the same kind of food, and as the Orang Outang was blessed with a keen appetite, he had no scruple to help himself, to as much of his friend's share as chance brought within his reach. One morning he was found making desperate attempts to annex the remnants of the monkey's breakfast by repeatedly thrusting his arms through the gratings. But all his tricks and trouble availed him not, as the light tin vessel containing the tempting morsel lay beyond the reach of his long arms. Having failed in his attempt to get at the food, he sat still for a few seconds as if to collect his thoughts, and to devise means for the accomplishment of his object, and presently made a rush into his sleeping apartment, fetched a quantity of straw, and twisted it into a sort of rough rope, and with it began striking the tin vessel containing the food, and ultimately succeeded in bringing it within the reach of his arms.

Orang Outang imitating human action. It is well known that in their wild state Orang Outangs indulge in the habit of building platforms of twigs and branches on large trees. Given opportunities they would do the same in captivity also.

The Orang Outang whose habits are here chronicled, was a remarkably docile animal, and was, therefore, allowed to enjoy as much free-

dom as it was deemed safe. The first use that he made of his liberty was to build himself a platform on one of the trees that stood close to his habitation. One cloudy August morning, while seated on his arbo-real perch, he noticed some early visitors open out their umbrellas to protect themselves from a passing shower of rain, and straightway he broke off a leafy branch and held it umbrella-fashion over his own head in imitation of the human folks!

It was amusing to see him following visitors who happened to have anything tied in their cloth, or who carried a bundle on their head. Quick to observe, he had noticed some of them untying a bundle to give him a feed, and by a simple process of ratiocination he came to connect all bundles with food and feeding!

PHYSIOLOGICAL ECONOMY OF ANIMALS AFFECTED BY ACCIDENTS.

A Large White Egret (*Herodias alba*) having lived happily in the Garden for many years managed to break one of its legs by sustaining a fracture of its left tarsus. The fracture was set up and the wound healed nicely, but the shock of the accident must have materially affected the physiological economy of the bird's system; as during the next two years it did not assume the full breeding plumage, or the bright green of the facial skin which it usually did in summer and which was such a characteristic feature of the bird. Although in about three years after the accident it began putting on the summer dress again, there was a marked deterioration in the character of the plumes and the colour of the facial skin. This might have been due to old age also.



IX.—*On the Variation of the Flower of Ranunculus arvensis*.—By I. H. BURKILL, M.A.

There is a regular sequence of organs in the Phanerogamic flower,—sepals, petals, stamens, carpels,—which is never departed from, and which may be said to be due to the passing of moods over the axis,—a mood for the formation of sepals, a mood for the formation of petals, a mood for the formation of stamens, and a mood for the formation of carpels. Each mood is preclusive in its time of the others and definite; and the flower axis runs through them as a matter of course.

In the flower, mood follows mood very closely; yet the tendency so widely manifest, for the floral organs to be formed in whorls is a separating of the moods each from its neighbours by concentrating on itself.